

April 2, 2003

**Akin Advocates Super Hornet in Key Armed Service Committee**

Washington, D.C. - In a hearing today of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, U.S. Rep. Todd Akin highlighted the service of the Super Hornet in the war against Iraq.

Akin, a senior member of the Subcommittee submitted for the record a question to Rear Admiral Mark P. Fitzgerald of the Navy's Air Warfare Division about the performance of the Super Hornet in Afghanistan and Iraq. The Super Hornet F/A-18 is the Navy's replacement for the F-14 Tomcat, which has been in service since the Vietnam War.

"The Navy has three Super Hornet squadrons in the greater Middle East region, one of which, Strike Fighter Squadron 115 aboard USS Abraham Lincoln, has been engaged in combat over Afghanistan and Iraq," said Akin. "Can you comment on the performance of the super hornet which entered combat on its first deployment and your ability to equip these aircraft with the hardware they need to conduct and sustain combat operations?"

Congressman Akin believes that the Super Hornet has proved invaluable to our efforts, and we need to be sure that the Navy has what it needs to equip these aircraft with the hardware they need to conduct and sustain combat operations. The Navy will reply in detail to Akin's question within the next several weeks. In the interim Akin believes it is important that the Super Hornets in service and those who fly and maintain them have all the assistance they need.

"The Super Hornet is a tremendous asset to America's air power and to our service personnel on the ground, and I am confident that under the peerless guidance of the men who fly it, the Super Hornet will again prove its worth as we continue to carry the battle to Baghdad," Akin said.